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MERE & TISBURY R.D.C.

ANNUAL REPORT

**Showing Sanitary Circumstances
of the Area**

In lieu of
MEDICAL OFFICER'S REPORT
1953

ANNUAL REPORT, 1953

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Senior Sanitary Inspector:

MAJOR T. A. BROWN, A.R.S.I.

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Council Offices

MERE



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Annual Report, 1953

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE DISTRICT

The Rural area, situated in the South West corner of Wiltshire, is mainly an agricultural one in which a good proportion of the inhabitants are engaged in milk production and the rearing of sheep and cattle and, to a lesser extent, arable farming.

There are no large scale Factories in the area.

The District is built up of twenty-six Parishes and the Council meets monthly, alternately at Mere and Tisbury.

There is no special Public Health Committee. Matters affecting Public Health are dealt with at the Council's monthly meeting.

The following figures give additional information about the district:—

Area: 71,319

Population: 11,444

Rateable Value: £51,334

Penny Rate Yields: £199 13s. 7d.

Number of inhabited houses: 3,583

Number of houses built in 1953:—

1 By Private Enterprise: 14

2 By Local Authority: 94

Number of buildings, etc, converted to dwelling houses:—

1 By Private Enterprise: 6

Public Health Staff

Medical Officer of Health—Vacant since the death of Dr. G. Napier in September, 1953.

Sanitary Inspector—Major T. A. Brown, M.S.I.A.

Qualifications: Certificates Royal Sanitary Institute and Sanitary Inspectors' Examination Joint Board (Sanitary Inspector), Royal Sanitary Institute (Inspector of Meat and Other Foods).

The Sanitary Inspector holds the appointments (inter alia) of Sanitary Surveyor, Sewerage Works Manager, Petroleum Officer, Refuse and Salvage Officer and certain other duties.

Clerical assistance is provided.

ANNUAL REPORTS OF MEDICAL OFFICERS OF HEALTH

1953 VITAL STATISTICS

Birth-rates, Death-rates, Analysis of Mortality, Maternal Mortality and Case-rates for Certain Infectious Diseases in the Year 1953. Provisional figures based on Quarterly Returns

	England and Wales	160 County Boroughs & Great Towns (including London) at 1951 Census)	160 Smaller Townships (Resident Population 25,000-50,000 at 1951 Census)	London Administrative County
<i>Births</i>	Rates per 1,000 Home Population			
Live Births	15.5	17.0	15.7	17.5
Still Births	0.35	0.43	0.34	0.38
	22.4 (a)	24.8 (a)	21.4 (a)	21.0 (a)
<i>Deaths</i>				
All Causes	11.4	12.2	11.3	12.5
Typhoid and paratyphoid	0.00	0.00	—	—
Whooping cough	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.00
Diphtheria	0.00	0.00	0.00	—
Tuberculosis	0.20	0.24	0.19	0.24
Influenza ...	0.16	0.15	0.17	0.15
Smallpox ...	0.00	0.00	0.00	—
Acute poliomyelitis (in- cluding polioencephalitis)	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
Pneumonia	0.55	0.59	0.52	0.64
<i>Notifications (Corrected)</i>				
Typhoid fever	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01
Paratyphoid fever	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
Meningococcal infection	0.03	0.04	0.03	0.03
Scarlet fever	1.39	1.50	1.44	1.02
Whooping cough	3.58	3.72	3.38	3.30
Diphtheria	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.00
Erysipelas	0.14	0.14	0.13	0.12
Smallpox ...	0.00	0.00	0.00	—
Measles ...	12.36	11.27	12.32	8.09
Pneumonia	0.84	0.92	0.76	0.73
Acute poliomyelitis (in- cluding polioencepha- litis) paralytic	0.07	0.06	0.06	0.07
Non-paralytic	0.04	0.03	0.04	0.03
Food poisoning	0.24	0.25	0.24	0.38
Puerperal pyrexia	18.23 (a)	24.33 (a)	12.46 (a)	28.61 (a)
	Rates per 1,000 Live Births			

Deaths

All causes under 1 year
of age ... 26·8 (b) 30·8 24·3 24·8

Enteritis and diarrhoea
under 2 years of Age... 1·1 1·3 0·9 1·1

(a) Per 1,000 Total (Live and Still) Births

(b) Per 1,000 related live births

Maternal Mortality in England and Wales

Intermediate List Number and cause		Number of deaths	Rates per 1,000 Total (Live and Still) Births	Rates per million women aged 15-44
A115	Sepsis of pregnancy, child- birth and the puerperium	68	0·10	
A116	Abortion with toxæmia ...	7	0·01	1
	Other toxæmias of preg- nancy and the puerperium	166	0·24	
A117	Haemorrhage of pregnancy and childbirth ...	90	0·13	
A118	Abortion without mention of sepsis or toxæmia ...	30	0·04	3
A119	Abortion with sepsis ...	39	0·06	4
A120	Other complications of preg- nancy, childbirth and the puerperium ...	125	0·18	

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA

Main Drainage

Mere The Ministry's Inquiry, in connection with the proposed scheme of reconstruction of the Sewage Works, was held on the 12th May, 1953; otherwise there has been no change in the condition of these Works as previously reported.

No. of connections made to the sewer: 7.

Tisbury These Works remain unchanged and overloading continues to increase, so much so that no large scale connections of houses can be sanctioned until reconstruction takes place.

Efforts have been made to improve the Contact Beds and Settling Tanks by more frequent sludging but pollution of the river remains unabated.

Representations have been made to the Ministry for priority to be given for the new Works to be put in hand as early as possible.

No. of connections made to the sewer: 12.

Hindon It is pleasing to report that the re-laying of new sewers and new Works commenced in March, 1953. It is hoped that the scheme will be completed towards the end of March, 1954.

No. of connections made to the sewer: 24.

Zeals The re-laying of new sewers and improvements to the existing Works (which were taken over from the Air Ministry) was completed during the year and the Works are now functioning satisfactorily.

It is anticipated that the connection of existing houses on the line of the new sewer will be gradually carried out.

No. of connections made to the sewer: 8.

East Knoyle These Works serve only a small portion of the village and are earmarked for reconstruction as soon as economic conditions allow.

Private Schemes

Maiden Bradley Negotiations are in progress with a view to taking over the privately owned Sewage Works. It is also proposed to extend the existing sewers and a preliminary scheme is in hand for the improvement of the existing Works.

Berwick St. John No complaints were received in connection with these Works which serve a small portion of the village.

The remaining villages rely mainly on Pail Closets and Septic Tanks for individual houses.

House Drainage

20 Septic Tanks were installed in areas which are not sewered. Provision for emptying Septic Tanks and Cesspools is carried out by a private firm operating in the district.

Public Cleansing

Scavenging The organised scheme for the collection and disposal of Household and Trade Refuse continues in force in the area.

Refuse is collected bi-monthly in the parishes of Mere and Tisbury and monthly for the remaining parishes

The vehicle used is a Dennis Refuse Collector, capacity 10 cubic yards, and has been in use since 1947.

The collection of salvage was discontinued during the year.

The refuse is deposited at the Council's Refuse Tips, situated at Wardour, Donhead St. Andrew and Semley. The Wardour and Semley Tips are rapidly filling up and there is an urgent need for additional tips in the Mere area in order to cut down the running costs.

The deposits of refuse are covered over with any material which may be available.

The approximate cost of collection is as follows:—

	£	s.	d.
Wages ...	727	14	2
Petrol and Repairs	378	4	10
Licence and Insurance	55	15	0
	£1,161	14	0

It will be seen from the above that proposals to have a fortnightly collection in all the Parishes would involve a considerable increase in the Rates.

Total refuse collected during the year:—

Household & Trade Refuse:		
No. of loads collected:	...	638
Approximate tonnage:	..	1,700

Verminous Premises Two houses were found to be infested with fleas and three with cockroaches. Disinfection and spraying were carried out and the results were successful.

Two sets of bedding were destroyed.

Rats and Mice (Prevention of Damage by Pests Act, 1949) Minor complaints with regard to rats and mice infestation were dealt with by the Council's Sanitary staff.

Co-operation with the Pests Destruction Officer of the Wiltshire Agricultural Executive Committee is still maintained with regard to premises requiring intensive and block control treatment.

No Rodent Officer has been appointed by the Council.

Baiting of the Council's Refuse Tips is carried out by Contract with the Pests Destruction Officer, treatment being applied Quarterly.

Below is a summary of the work carried out:—

No. of Properties inspected by Local Authority during 1953 :—

Local Authority	Dwelling Houses	Agricultural	All other (including Business and Industrial)	Total
—	18	2	4	24

No. of Properties found to be infested by rats :—

Major :—

—	1	—	—	2
---	---	---	---	---

Minor :—

1	24	1	4	30
---	----	---	---	----

No. of Properties found to be seriously infested by mice :—

—	—	—	—	—
---	---	---	---	---

No. of infested Properties treated by Local Authority :—

1	18	—	—	19
---	----	---	---	----

Smoke Abatement

Periodical observations were made on the few Factory chimneys in the area but no nuisance was recorded.

Sanitation of Special Premises

Schools Steady progress with regard to school premises continues. New sanitary conveniences with Septic Tank arrangement were provided to Donhead St. Andrew School.

New sanitary conveniences with wash basins and hot water arrangements, both for the Staff and School children, were installed at East Knoyle School.

Re-decorations were carried out during the year to other Schools in the district.

Cafes Visits were made to these premises and the standard of cleanliness is satisfactory. No complaints were reported.

Public Houses and Hotels Additional sanitary accommodation was provided to one public House and new sanitary accommodation, with improvements to the interior of the premises, was provided to another.

Food Preparing Premises The following premises are registered under Section 14 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1938.

General Stores	...	4
Grocery & Provisions		8
Butcher Shops	...	6
Fish Frying premises		4
		—
Total		22
		—

These premises were subjected to the usual routine inspections, including Bakehouses, where lime-washing and painting has been carried out on verbal requests being made.

Hygienic conditions were up to standard.

Ice Cream There are 20 premises registered to sell Ice Cream by retail, supplies being obtained from wholesale manufacturers situated outside the district.

The retail premises were subjected to the usual inspections and were found to be satisfactory.

There were no cases of illness arising out of the consumption of this food.

Butchers' Shops These premises were regularly inspected including the preparing rooms where meat products and sausages are made.

As in previous years the cleanliness of the premises is well up to standard.

There is nothing of an adverse nature to comment on.

Meat and Other Foods

Centralised slaughtering is carried out at Salisbury where all home-killed carcasses are inspected before entering the district. As a further precaution the meat is also periodically examined at the Butchers' Shops.

The following was condemned as unfit for human consumption :—

Beef	...	...	66 lbs.
Fish	...	..	14 lbs.
Jam	..	...	10½ lds.
Tinned Luncheon Pork			38 lbs.
Tinned Fruit	...		51 tins
Tinned Vegetables	...		4 tins

All the foregoing were voluntarily surrendered at the time and no proceedings were taken.

The disposal of condemned food is dealt with by burning or burial.

Slaughter of Animals Act

No. of renewals of Licences issued to Slaughtermen under the 1933 Act	12
No. of new licences issued	1
No. of legal proceedings taken	Nil

Clean Food Campaign

No significant change is recorded in connection with the above campaign. It is hoped that the new forthcoming legislation will in time further the cause for improvement in food cleanliness, so necessary.

One isolated case of Food Poisoning was reported during the year.

Return of Food Poisoning Notifications

Outbreaks due to identified Agents :—

Total Outbreaks: 1	Total Cases: 1
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Outbreaks due to:—

(a) Chemical Poisons	...	...	Nil
(b) Salmonella Organisms	...	...	1
(c) Staphylococci (including toxin)	...	...	Nil
(d) Cl. Botulium	...	...	Nil
(e) Other bacteria	...	..	Nil

Outbreaks of undiscovered causes:—

Total Outbreaks: Nil	Total Cases: Nil
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Milk and Dairies

No. of Dairies registered with Local Authority	4		
No. of registered Distributors	...	...	4
No. of T.T. Dealers' Licences	...	...	4
No. of T.T. Supplementary Licences	...	...	1
No. of Pasteurised Dealers' Licences	...	...	1

Inspections of Milk Roundsmen's Vans and Dairies were made. It would be an advantage if Milk Roundsmen were provided with suitable white overalls when handling and delivering milk.

The quality of Milk supplies has been satisfactory.

Water Supply

Part 2 of the Comprehensive Scheme has been completed.

Full details of parts 4 and 5 are awaited pending the Ministry's Public Inquiry into the remainder of the Comprehensive Scheme which is expected to be held early in February, 1954.

The new Pumping Station for the whole scheme is being constructed at Mere and it is hoped to have it ready for use in the Autumn of 1954.

The Contractors' workmen were subjected to Pathological Tests and the results were as follows:—

BLOOD—WIDAL REACTION—6 employees negative results.

FAECES—Cultures show no organisms of the enterica, dysentery or Salmonella groups.

BLOOD—WIDAL REACTION—3 employees: This titre may be normal or result from a previous T.A.B. inoculation.

FAECES—Cultures show no organisms of the enterica, dysentery or Salmonella Groups.

Five Chemical Analyses of the Council's Public Supplies were taken during the year and the results were satisfactory.

The following data dealing with Bacteriological samples is submitted in accordance with Circular 13/47 Ministry of Health.

- 1 The quality of water depends generally on the source. Much of the water in the district is derived from the chalk and is of excellent quality. The quality of the water from the numerous shallow wells varies considerably.
- 2 Results of public supply bacteriological analyses are given in the attached table.

- 3 The water supplied by the Council is alkaline and has no plumbo-solvent properties.
- 4 Chlorination is carried out to all public services except Teffont, which is chlorinated when occasion demands
- 5 Number of houses supplied from Public sources in villages:

PARISH	DIRECT		BY STANDPIPE	
	No. of Houses	Population (approx.)	No of Houses	Population
Mere ...	614	2,090	—	—
Zeals ...	111	310	—	—
West Knoyle ...	36	117	—	—
Sedgehill ...	23	120	—	—
Hindon ...	123	430	—	20
Chilmark ...	71	250	5	12
Tisbury ...	433	1,482	—	—
Teffont ...	46	135	44	100
Swallowcliffe ...	21	80	—	—
Donheads ...	313	857	—	—
Sutton Mandeville	8	21	—	—
	1,799	5,892	49	132

Results of the Public Supply Bacteriological Analyses

Source	Date	Total Colonies on Agar at 37C per 1 m.l. of water	Coli Aerogenes per 100 m.l. water	Faecal type B. Coli per 100 m.l. of water
Donhead	1- 1-53	7	—	—
Donhead	1- 4-53	1	—	—
Donhead	15- 7-53	10	—	—
Donhead	21-10-53	6	8	—
Mere	1- 4-53	1	—	—
Mere	14- 7-53	62	—	—
Mere	21-10-53	14	—	—
Teffont	18- 3-53	3	—	—
Teffont	21- 7-53	2	3	—
Teffont	8-10-53	500+	20	—
Tisbury	18- 3-53	4	—	—
Tisbury	14- 7-53	70	3	—
Tisbury	26- 8-53	20	3	—
Tisbury	7-10-53	11	—	—

Private Sources

A substantial number of houses in the following Parishes continue to be served with a piped pressure supply, Maiden Bradley, Stourton, Kilmington, Semley, Fonthill Bishop, Fonthill Gifford, Chicklade, Berwick St. Leonard, Wardour, West Tisbury, East Knoyle and Berwick St. John.

As in previous years the supply of water at East Knoyle gave further cause for anxiety.

There are three private supplies serving the village as follows:—
Underhill—Satisfactory both in purity and quantity.

Milton supply—Purity satisfactory but supply precarious.

Knoyle House supply—Purity satisfactory but supply precarious.

During the year the Official Receiver took over control of Milton and Knoyle House supplies. The Council is now in process of negotiating to take over the Milton water supply which, if efficiently organised, should remedy complaints until the Comprehensive Scheme is put into operation. For the present temporary arrangements have been made with the owner of the Underhill water undertaking to augment the Milton supply. As a result of the arrangements considerable improvement has taken place and further complaints reduced to the minimum.

15 samples were taken from private sources and forwarded for Bacteriological analysis. The following shows the result:—

3 samples show no evidence of pollution.

4 samples show evidence of pollution with coliform organisms of non-faecal type.

8 samples show varying degrees of pollution with organisms of faecal type.

Necessary action was taken to have wells and other sources of supply cleaned out and chlorination advised when essential.

Factories

Premises	No. on Register	No. of inspections	No of written notices	No. of occupiers prosecuted
Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	6	6	1	—
Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	30	28	—	—
Other Premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out-workers' premises)	—	—	—	—
Total	36	34	1	—

Defects

Particulars. No. of cases in which defects were found.

	Found	Remedied	Referred by H.M. Inspector	Cases in which prosecutions were instituted
Want of cleanliness	1	1	—	—
Total	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>—</u>

Housing Acts 1936-1949

5 applications for an Improvement Grant were received and 3 were recommended for a grant.

Housing

The forthcoming legislation on Housing will set up new problems, both economic and administrative.

Broadly the living accommodation will be divided into the following Classes (i) New houses (ii) Essentially sound houses (iii) Delapidated houses (iv) Slums. In practice, of course, no fine dividing line can be drawn between any of these Categories and there will be many cases which can fall into more than one Category.

With regard to essentially sound houses, the obvious solution would be to improve the houses as envisaged in the Housing Act, 1949 with such amenities as Bath Room, Hot Water, Water Carriage sanitation (where applicable), provision of Food Store, etc.

The White Paper increases the incentive to landlords by raising the amount to which the rent can be increased to 8% of the value of the work done, less grant.

The practical difficulty in the matter for most landlords will be the raising of the necessary capital but it is possible for the Local Authority to come to the rescue under the powers given by the Housing Act, 1949 for, although it is not generally realised, the Local Authority has power to advance money, at attractive interest rates, for improvement of houses.

Delapidated Houses

It is now generally recognised that repairs cost at least double the pre-war value and therefore the difficulties which landlords have to face can be appreciated, having regard to the low economic rents received in rural areas.

There is great danger that if the repairs bill is too high the landlord man not have the necessary capital.

The alternative is for the Local Authority to buy some of the houses, at near site value, and to carry out repairs in order to bring the houses up to a reasonable standard of fitness. So far as rural areas are concerned, the easing of some of the restrictive conditions with regard to the Improvement Grant under Housing Act, 1949, will be an advantage.

Housing Statistics for 1953

1 Number of New Houses and Flats erected during the year:

(a) By Local Authority	...	...	...	94
(b) By Private Enterprise	...	...	...	9

2 Inspection of Dwellings during the year:

(i) Inspected for housing defects under P.H. Acts	...	...	...	24
(ii) " " " " " " Housing Acts	..	..	..	Nil
(iii) No. of dwellings found so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for habitation	...	...	...	Nil
(iv) No. of dwellings found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for habitation	...	...	...	22

3 Remedy of Defects by Informal Action:

No. of dwellings rendered fit in consequence of Informal Action 16

4 Action under Statutory Powers (Public Health & Housing Acts):

(A) Proceedings under Section 9, 10 and 16 Housing Acts, 1936	Nil
(B) Proceedings under Public Health Acts	
No. of dwellings in respect of which formal notices were served	 Nil
(c) Proceedings under Section 11 and 13 Housing Acts, 1936	
(i) Number of Demolition Orders made	 1
(ii) No. of houses demolished as result of Demolition Orders	1
(iit) Number of undertakings accepted	 Nil
(iv) Number of undertakings completed	 Nil
(D) Proceedings under Section 25 and 26 Housing Act, 1936	Nil
(E) Proceedings under Section 12 Housing Act, 1936	... Nil

5 Housing Act, 1936, Part iv. Overcrowding:

(i) Number of cases of overcrowded dwellings at end of year	1
(ii) Number of cases discovered during year...	... 3
(iii) Number of cases abated during year	... 2

Summary of All Inspections

Complaints (Public Health)	...	...	...	97
Water Supply	...	...	...	38
Food Premises	...	...	...	44
Farms, Dairies	...	...	...	10
Infectious Disease	...	...	...	25
Rats and Mice Destruction	...	...	...	74
Factories ...	...	...	...	34
Housing ...	...	...	...	58
Other Public Health Matters	...	...	...	12
Council House Repairs	...	...	...	491
Miscellaneous (Building, Licensing and Town and Country Planning, Building Byelaws and Petroleum Acts)	...	...	...	334
Total				<u>1,217</u>

Rag Flock and other Filling Materials Act, 1951

There are no premises requiring Licensing or Registering under the above Act.

Outworkers' Premises

Number on Register	...	...	...	56
Work:—Wearing Apparel	...	...	...	56
Number of cases of default in sending lists to the Council	Nil			Nil
Number of prosecutions for failure to supply lists	...	...	...	Nil
Notices served	...	...	...	Nil
Prosecution	...	...	...	Nil

Infectious Disease

The following cases of Infectious Disease were reported during the year:—

Measles	...	176
Whooping Cough	...	50
Scarlet Fever	...	11
Pneumonia	...	4
Erysipelas	...	2
Food Poisoning...	...	1
Puerperal Pyrexia	...	1

Tuberculosis

There was one case reported during the year.

